(b) to (d) The resources for meeting the Universal Service Obligation are generated through a Universal Service Levy (USL) which is a percentage of the revenue earned by the telecom service providers under various licenses. Credits to the Universal Obligation Fund (USOF) are through parliamentary approvals. No fund allotted to USOF is laying unutilized since the inception of the fund on 01.04.2002. As on 31.03.2008, a cumulative amount of Rs.6371 crores have been allocated to USOF and disbursed by it towards rural telecommunications under various schemes.

As per Departmental figures, the collection of USL net of USOF subsidy disbursement was Rs. 14,033 crore as on 31.03.2008. Out of this, Rs. 2000 crore has been approved by the Parliament for allocation to the USO Fund for 2008-09 under the Budget Allotment 2008-09.

This amount is being utilized to support various schemes such as provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs), Rural Community Phones (RCPs), Rural Household Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs), setting up and managing infrastructure sites (towers) in 500 districts spread over 27 states for provision of mobile services in the specified rural and remote areas, where there is no existing fixed wireless or mobile coverage, Broadband connectivity for rural areas, creation of Optical Fiber network in rural and remote areas.

NLCPR Schemes

1113. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the project sanctioned by Government in the north-eastern States under NLCPR schemes in the years 2005- 06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 with the names of the States;

(b) the amount sanctioned and disbursed against each of the projects as mentioned in reply to part (a) above;

(c) the Status of the projects in respect of their completion till date; and

(d) the reasons where the projects have not been completed as per schedule?

THE MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The State-wise details of projects sanctioned for funding under Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) during 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 is available on this Ministry's *website www.mdoner.gov.in* under the head "NLCPR" and State-wise they can be seen under sub-head "e. Sanctioned Projects".

(b) and (c) The State-wise and project-wise details of amount sanctioned, released and the status of completion of all the projects sanctioned under NLCPR, including the projects sanctioned during 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 is also available on Ministry's *website www.mdoner.gov.in* under the head "NLCPR" and State-wise they can be seen under sub-head "a. NLCPR Projects".

(d) The reasons where the projects have not been completed as per schedule include, *inter-alia*, shorter working period because of long rainy season in the North East, delay on the

part of some State Government to release funds to the implementing agencies, law and order problems in some States and limitations of technical and professional expertise.

Vision Document 2020

1114. SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the vision document 2020 has been finalized by his Ministry;

(b) if so, salient features and strategy finalized for translating the vision into action and

(c) decision taken by Government towards implementation of this plan from Eleventh Plan period?

THE MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir. The North Eastern Region Vision 2020 document has been finalized. The document was adopted by the North-Eastern Council in its 56th meeting held at Agartala, on 12-13 May 2008. The document was also formally released by the Honourable Prime Minister on 2nd July 2008. It was laid on the table of the Lok Sabha on 22 October 2008.

(b) The Vision document sets up the goals, identifies the challenges and suggests regional and sectoral implementation strategies for promoting the socio-economic prosperity of the region, with a view to growth rates in the North-East Region catching up with the overall national growth rates.

The document suggests a sex-fold strategy for the comprehensive developments of the region:

- Empowering people by maximising self-governance and participatory development through grass-root planning to promote inclusive development.
- Creation of development opportunities for the rural areas through enhancing productivity in agriculture and allied activities such as animal husbandry, horticulture, floriculture, fisheries and generation of livelihood options through rural non-farm employment.
- To develop sectors in the region which have a comparative advantage such as agro processing, hydel power generation.
- Enhancing the skills and competencies of the people and building the capacities for institutions within the Government and outside.
- Creating a hospitable investment climate to encourage investment by private sector particularly for infrastructure.
- Harnessing the resources of the Government and the private sector to realise the objectives of the Vision.